

Lesson Name : 41

Lesson Title : Writing a Summary Paragraph

Course Name : English 2 Part 1 [Honors]

Task Id : 51666458

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Essential Instruction

It is a good idea to use your digital notebook to keep notes on new vocabulary and definitions that you may need to reference.

### How to Write a Summary Paragraph

When you write about a work of literature, you are often expected to make an argument about what it means. Writing a **summary paragraph** is a good way to get you familiar with the terms we use to talk about a text. It gives you a chance to show you can use words like setting and conflict—words you will use as you grow more skilled at writing about literature. Your job when writing a **summary paragraph** is to talk about your topic in a way that keeps your reader's interest. No one wants to read a summary that sounds like this:

First Goldilocks went into the house and then she ate the porridge and then she broke the chair and then she fell asleep and then the bears came home and then she ran away.

What's wrong with this **summary paragraph**? It introduces the characters, plot, and conflict, but it doesn't do much else. For one thing, it's written as a run-on sentence. It's also boring and repetitive and it relies on the same transition "and then" every time. In addition, it doesn't set the scene in a way that is interesting and engaging for the reader.

In a well-written **paragraph**, all the sentences will flow and work together to express a clear thought. A **paragraph** should be at least three to five sentences long, and should have a clear beginning, middle, and end. All the ideas in a **paragraph** should relate to one another.

A stand-alone **paragraph**, just like a body **paragraph** in an essay, should begin with a topic sentence. The topic sentence should be followed by a minimum of two to three supporting details. All supporting details should clearly relate to your topic sentence. Treat your persuasive **paragraph** just as you would a body **paragraph**; make sure your ideas are cohesive, meaning they fit together well. Also, make sure that your **paragraph** flows and is interesting and engaging. Avoid sentence fragments and run-ons. Make sure that each sentence communicates a complete thought with a subject and a verb.

### Using a Story Map

Before you begin to write a paragraph that discusses the plot of a story, consider create a **story map**. A **story map** is a graphic organizer that can help you to recall details, characters, and events from your chosen book. As you fill out a **story map**, use as many literary terms as you can. Here are some of the terms you might use when developing a **story map**:

**Setting** – This refers to the time and place of a story. Every story has a setting. The setting can be during a certain time, such as the past or the future, or it can be a specific location, such as a house, the beach, or a city.

**Main Character** – Also commonly known as the "protagonist," this is the most important character in a story. The main character sees most of the conflict, and is involved in most of the actions and events in the story.

**Supporting Characters** – These characters have some relation to the main character, but they can generally not stand on their own in a story. Supporting characters can be simple or complex, depending on their roles in stories.

**Main Conflict** – Conflict refers to the struggle between two forces. It can be between a character and his own thoughts (internal conflict), or between a character and another character or group, or a force of nature, such as a storm or a tidal wave (external conflict). Every story has some type of conflict. The main conflict is the one that has the most impact on the story.

**Key Events** – This refers to all the events in a story that somehow affect the main character, supporting characters, and the main conflict. Key events help the reader to remember important moments in the story.

**Resolution** – This refers to how the main conflict is resolved in a story. A resolution can be happy, such as when the hero and his lady love ride off into the sunset, or it can leave the reader feeling unsettled and wanting to know more. Every story has a resolution of some kind.

A sample **story map** is available [here](#).

This one may not fit your chosen story exactly, and you might have to adjust the number of lines depending on your topic. Use your **story map** as a guide to prepare a summary paragraph. When writing about a book, don't forget to introduce your book's title (either italicized or underlined) and author in the beginning of your paragraph. The title and author should be cited as follows:

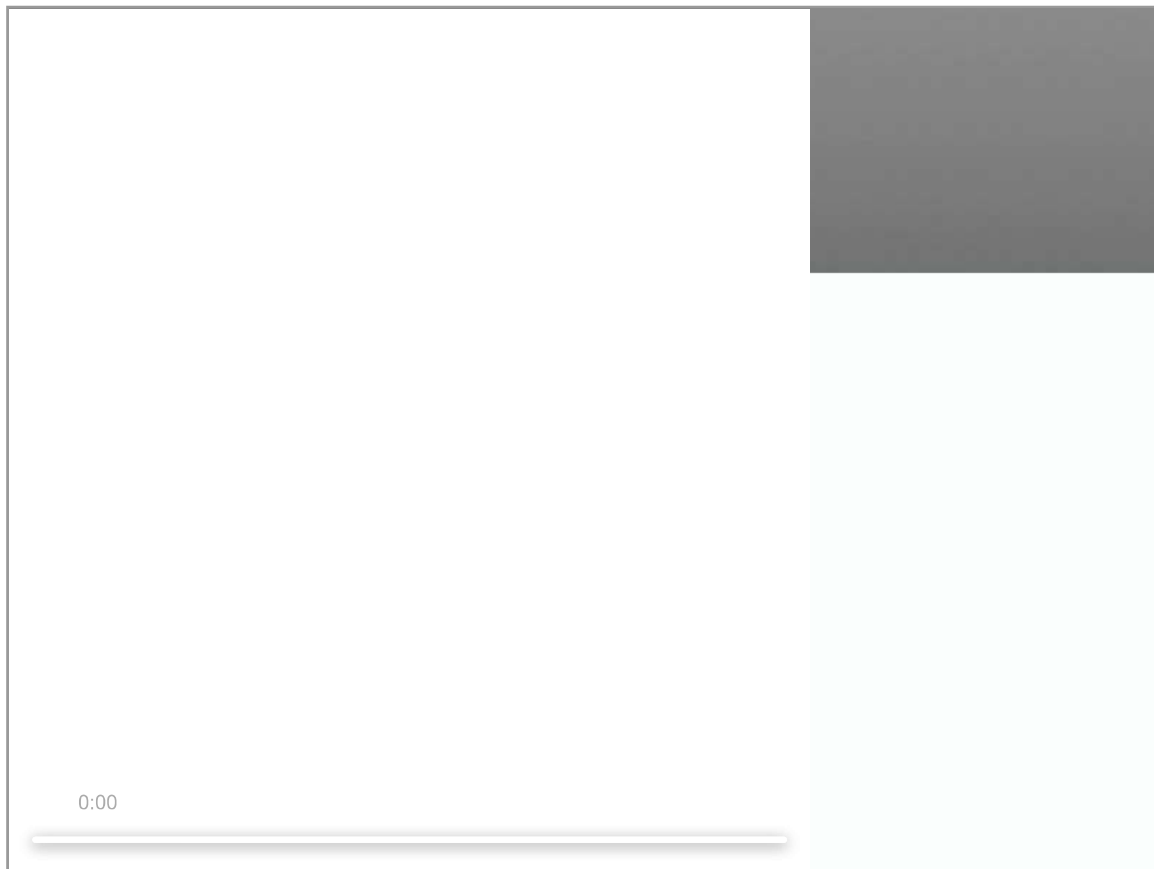
*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain

or

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain

Before you begin any writing assignment, review the [rubric](#) that will be used to evaluate your writing.

Also, it might be helpful to review the [writing prompt](#) steps.



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